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## A PECULIAR LEGLESS SHEEP.

CHARLES R. STOCKARD.

A peculiar sport lately appeared in a flock of sheep in Nash County, N. C.<sup>1</sup> During the early part of February a black ewe gave birth to a lamb by a white ram ; the offspring was entirely devoid of all external indications of limbs and was black in color like its mother. This lamb has a perfect head and body with the usual long tail, and has been in a healthy condition since birth. It was fed on milk from a bottle for the first month or two, but is now able to eat grass and appears normal in size and other respects except for its apodal condition. The movements of this animal are limited ; it can right itself if turned on its back and can twist its body about to some extent, but is entirely incapable of any progressive movements (Figs. 1 and 2, Pl. XIII.).

Photographs and descriptions of the lamb indicate that it is a sport or mutation rather than a merely deformed monster.

Another legless lamb almost identically like the first one was born in this same flock three months later. The two lambs had the same father (there being only one ram with the flock), but different mothers. This second lamb was a white male, and unfortunately was killed.

The parent ram is an old sheep, but no definite or authentic records of his previous offsprings can be obtained. It is a peculiar coincidence, however, that two of his young in so short a time should have shown this remarkable legless condition. Such a fact suggests, from the rather insufficient evidence, that this male has within his germ-cells a tendency to produce these lambs without legs.

The occurrence of the legless animals recalls the classical case of the ancon ram, a sheep with short crooked legs, that was born in Massachusetts about 1791. The ancon race was produced from this one ram by crossing at first with common sheep. The

<sup>1</sup> I have not up to this time been so fortunate as to personally observe these sheep, but the photographs and descriptions have been obtained from an entirely reliable source.

legless sheep here recorded seem to have carried such a variation a last step further, and it will be extremely interesting to know whether this character will tend to establish itself and produce a legless race.

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## EXPLANATION OF PLATE XIII.

FIG. 1. Shows a photograph of the apodal lamb with its ventral surface turned upward; the animal lying on its back.

FIG. 2. The lamb with its ventral surface toward the reader. Both photographs serve to show the entire absence of external limbs.

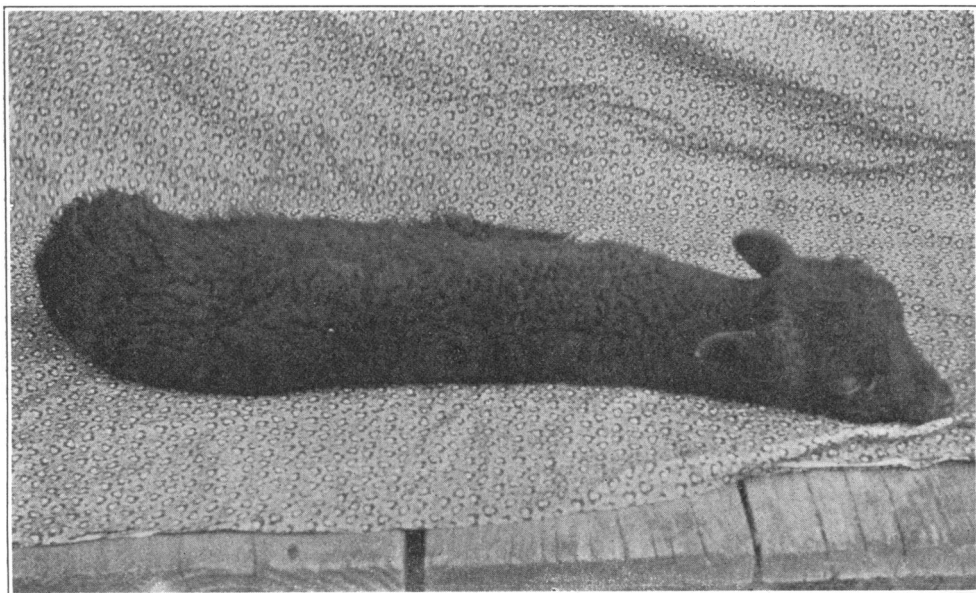


FIG. 1.

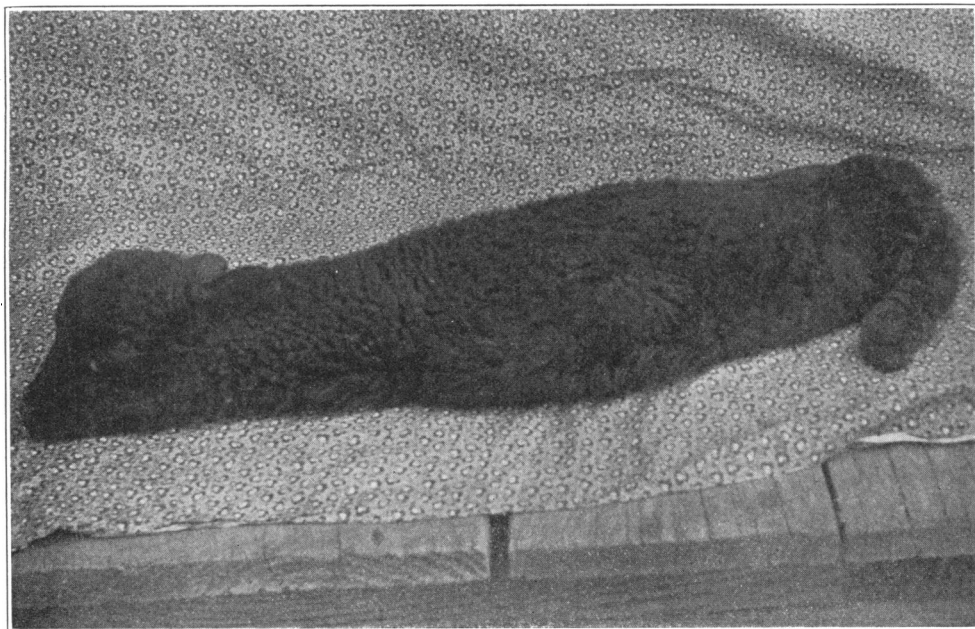


FIG. 2.